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## Wherein Refinishing Makes Refurnishing Easy

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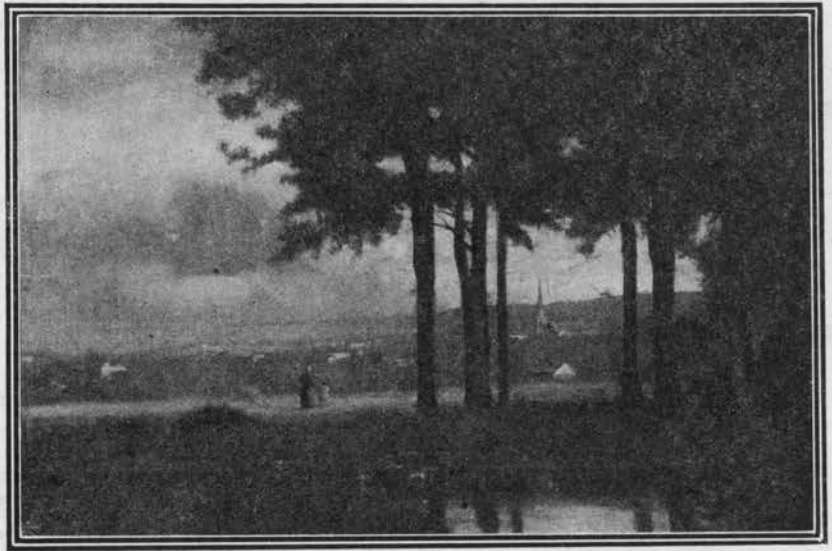
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This Landscape Scene is Well Suited for Either Library or Dining Room

## Wherein Refinishing Makes Refurnishing Easy

By GLENNA HESSE

ONE of the most charming and most comfortable apartments near the Iowa State College campus is a temporary home of two home economics instructors which has been furnished very largely with refinished discarded, and second hand furniture.

This apartment was furnished after these two instructors had spent two rather unsatisfactory years in already furnished rooms. To those who are used to comfort and a "homey" atmosphere, "furnished rooms" are a poor substitute for a real home.

"Snails never have the problem of making a temporary home for themselves; they carry their house along on their backs but since we couldn't do this and since we couldn't afford to rent an unfurnished apartment and buy an entire new set of furniture we used our wits. Some second hand furniture, several quarts of paint and varnish, the assistance of a home economics class who were studying the re-finishing of furniture, and

our own spare hours, and we now have a homey and comfortable apartment," one instructor said not long ago.

After the apartment, which consists of a large living room, a sleeping room and a combination dining room and kitchenette, was leased, the first problem was the furnishing of the dining room. Chairs and a table were the essentials. An old fashioned drop leaf table, so battered as to be past redemption in its natural wood was found in a local second hand store. The second hand man parted with it for \$5. Six pine chairs with an ugly clear varnish finish were purchased from a commercial firm for \$2.20 each. With the help of the class, which was mentioned before, the chairs and the table were refinished in ivory enamel.

The varnish was removed from the chairs by applying a commercial varnish remover. This was allowed to stand for ten minutes and then the softened varnish was scraped from the plain surface with a blunt knife. The rounded surfaces

were rubbed with a soft cloth. Then two coats of flat white paint applied to the chair gave body for the two coats of ivory enamel which followed.

A good scrubbing with sal soda and water removed the dirt from the old table. Then with two coats of flat white paint and two coats of ivory enamel the charming ivory enamel dining suite was finished.

For the living room two second hand rockers were refinished in gloss black enamel and an old reed chair, formerly used as a porch rocker was painted with first gloss black enamel and then frosted (according to the directions for frosting which were given on page 5 of the August-September issue of the Homemaker). This chair then matched a new frosted wicker day bed which was one of the few new pieces of furniture purchased for the apartment. The brilliant cretonne of the day bed was matched in cushions for the chair and draperies for the windows. A small scarred sewing rocker was also refinished in gloss black.

To relieve the monotony of all black furniture, a conventional motif of flowers in brilliant colors of lavender, rose and green was designed by one of the girls in the home economics class and put on the backs of the chairs. The same design was carried out on a folding table of maple refinished like the chairs. On the table the motif was repeated several times so as to form a circle on the table top.

A mahogany desk holding an old blue vase and a mahogany book case add much to the appearance of the living room at present. Did I say mahogany bookcase? Well! it looks like mahogany but it's body really consists of a few scraps of lumber with some pieces of melon crate for trimmings, dark mahogany stain and a coat each of varnish and wax make an attractive piece of furniture. The orange bowl which is now used as the sole decoration on the book case contrasts with the dark-

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An Old Drop Leaf Table and Six Pine Chairs Formed this Dining Set

## FURNISHING BY REFINISHING

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ness of the wood and makes it really a thing of beauty. An old screen dragged out of a friend's attic and re-finished also in mahogany matches the few pieces of new furniture which were purchased for the living room. The entire cost of all the refinishing materials was \$10.73.

There were other things which were considered before the home was completely furnished. Well chosen pictures, several rugs (some new and several which were merely old rag rugs re-dyed) and other articles now add charm to the apartment. New pieces of furniture are being added from time to time. But the apartment remains a charming homey and practical example of the possibilities of furnishing a temporary home cheaply, by using refinished furniture.

## THE BANANAS OF THE TROPICS

Poets have celebrated the banana plant for its beauty, its luxuriance, the majesty of its leaves and the delicacy of its fruit; but never have they sufficiently praised the utility of this tropical product. Those who have never lived in southern countries are unable to appreciate its value. Some look even with indifference upon the gigantic clusters of this fruit, as they are unloaded from the steamers and sailing vessels; and yet they deserve special attention and admiration, for they are to the inhabitants of the torrid zone what potatoes are to those of the north temperate zone.

The banana tree is one of the most striking illustrations of tropical fertility and exuberance. A plant which, in a northern climate, would require many years to gain strength and size, is there the production of ten or twelve months. The native of the south plants a few grains, taken from an old tree, in a moist and sandy soil, along some river or lake; they develop with the greatest rapidity, and at the end of ten months, the first crop may be gathered, though the clust-

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